Agreement between India and Singapore to Promote Tourist Circuit

3531. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Singapore have agreed to co-promote and market both the countries as a tourist circuit;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including results of studies made, if any, on the broad pattern of tourists visiting both India and Singapore and projections of inflow of additional tourists to the two countries;

(c) the details of the strategy drawn for special focus on tourists from any specific country(ies) in the initial stages; and

(d) the details of experience of the existing similar tourist circuit, consisting of Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (d) India and Singapore signed an Agreement on Tourism Cooperation on 24th January, 1994. Besides cooperation in other areas, the Agreement provides for exchange of information on tourism industries and exploring opportunities for cooperation in areas of mutual interest for development of tourism in both the countries. A joint Study Group on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between India and Singapore had recommended that areas of cooperation in the tourism sector could be activated for the mutual benefit of both countries.

Decline in Foreign Tourists

†3532. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign tourists visited India in the year 2004-05 and to what extent this number was more or less as compared with that of the year 2003-04;

(b) the foreign currency earned through the visit of foreign tourists into India and steps being taken by Government to attract the foreign tourists to visit India; and

(c) the initiative taken for granting the industry status to the tourism in India alongwith the revenue earning by Government through the service tax in tourism sector?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.